

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9760

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MASS, MILI, TH

SUBJ: U.S. MILITARY REDUCTIONS IN THAILAND

1. PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PROMOJ TALKED WITH NEWSMEN MARCH 8 ABOUT U.S. MILITARY REDUCTIONS IN THAILAND. FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION BY USIS.

2. BEGIN EXCERPT

REPORTER: HAVE YOU RECEIVED A REPORT YET ON U.S. TROOPS WHO WILL CONTINUE BEING STATIONED IN THAILAND?

KHUKRIT: NEGOTIATIONS ARE STILL BEING HELD WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. IF THEY REMAIN, IT MUST IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR CONDITIONS, AND THEY MUST BE UNDER THAI LAW. OTHERWISE, THEY CAN LEAVE HERE ANY TIME. IT IS UP TO THEM.

REPORTER: IT IS REPORTED THEY HAVE SAID THEY WILL NOT HOLD NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THAT THEY WILL NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH THE SUPREME COMMAND. COULD THEY DO THAT?

KHUKRT: NO. I WOULD NO RECOGNIZE SUCH NEGOTIATIONS. THEY MUST BE HELD WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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IS THE PROCEDURE ALWAYS FOLLOWED IN ADMINISTRATION OF THE

KINGDOM OF THAILAND, AND FROM THE VERY START. GO AND FIND A COPY OF THE BOOK ON "HISTORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, RULES AND REGULATIONS." NO NEW RULES OR REGULATIONS MUST BE INTRODUCED. THE SUPREME COMMAND HAS NO AUTHORITY TO HOLD NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

REPORTER: THE PROBLEM FACED IS THAT THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SAYS THAT WE ARE NOT YET ABLE TO STAND ON OUR OWN FEET. HE MADE THAT STATEMENT WHEN WOMEN REPORTERS INVITED HIM TO GIVE A TALK AT THE REPORTERS ASSOCIATION ON REPORTERS DAY.

KHUKRIT: BEAR IN MIND WHAT HE SAID: BUT SINCE YOU WANT AMERICA TO PULL OUT, IT MUST PULL OUT, AND WE WILL HAVE TO STAND ON ONLY ONE FOOT TEMPORARILY, WHILE THE GOVERNMENT CONCENTRATES UNCEASINGLY ON ITS POLICY TO BUILD UP THE STRENGTH OF OUR ARMED FORCES.

REPORTER: DOESN'T THAT CONCERN THE ALLOCATION PROVIDED FROM THE NATIONAL BUDGET?

KHUKRIT: OF COURSE. THE ALLOCATION WAS CUT DOWN.

REPORTER: THEN IT IS NECESSARY FOR US TO DEPEND ON WORLD POWERS.

KHUKRIT: WE CANNOT DEPEND ON A WORLD POWER BECAUSE THAT WOULD CONFLICT WITH PUBLIC OPINION.

REPORTER: COULDN'T WE DEPEND ON A WORLD POWER IF THERE ARE NO STRINGS AT ALL ATTACHED TO AID GIVEN US?

KHUKRIT: THAT IS THE FORM OF AID WE WANT, BUT NO AID IS GIVEN WITHOUT DEMANDING CONDITIONS IN RETURN, I, TOO, AM A THAI WHO CHERISHES THE PRESTIGE AND DIGNITY OF OUR NATION. I HAVE ENDEAVORED TO OBTAIN FOREIGN AID THAT DOES NOT PUT ANY COMMITMENTS ON US. BUT SHOULD IT CONFLICT WITH THEIR POLICY TO GIVE AID UNCONDITIONALLY, OR WITHOUT OBTAINING ANYTHING IN RETURN, WE HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE. IF WE CANNOT OBTAIN FOREIGN AID, IT CAN'T BE HELPED. WE MUST DEPEND ON OURSELVES TO PROTECT OUR OWN COUNTRY. WE HAVE CONCENTRATED ON DIPLOMACY TO THE MOST OF OUR ABILITY, IN ORDER TO BE A WAY TO PROTECT OUR COUNTRY, BUT NOBODY REALIZES THAT, NEITHER DOES ANYBODY FEEL ANY SYMPATHY FOR US. IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, WE ARE ABUSED DAILY AND WITHOUT END FOR NOT OPENING OUR GATES TO LAOS THOUGH IT IS ABUSING AND ATTACKING US DAILY, OR ELSE FOR NOT TAKING DRASTIC ACTION WHEN INCIDENTS OCCUR. PLEASE UNCLASSIFIED

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FEEL SOME SYMPATHY FOR US BECAUSE WE MUST HAVE PATIENCE AND ENDURANCE SINCE WE MUST PROMOTE RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, INCLUDING LAOS AND CAMBODIA. AND FOR WHAT REASON? THEREFORE, PLEASE GO TO THE POLLS AND VOTE FOR THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY. END EXCERPT WHITEHOUSE

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